



Government
of
Newfoundland
and
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Course Description

WITHDRAWN

Language 3101

Department of Education

Division of Program Development

Authorized by the Minister

LANGUAGE 3101
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Division of Program Development

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LANGUAGE COURSES (AN OVERVIEW)

A minimum of three language courses is required. One course is required in each of the three years of levels one, two, and three.

All language courses are one-credit courses. In practical terms, this means that each course taught will require a minimum of one 40-45 minute period every other day for the full year to a minimum of 55 hours.

Language course offerings are as follows:

Language 1101	The writing of argumentation and persuasion
Basic English 1102	Of a general nature, for students who are weak in language skills
Language 2101	Research writing
Vocational English 2102	Practical application of language skills to the world of work (technical and trades areas)
Language 3101	Emphasis on style in writing narration, description, exposition
Business English 3102	The application of language in the business world
Advanced Writing 3103	Creative writing of poems, plays, stories
Language Study 3104	An indepth study of the English language

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The main purpose of Language 3101 is to develop and refine students' writing styles through both analyzing and writing prose - exposition, description, and narration.

Students will closely analyze examples of prose (exposition, description, narration) by both famous writers and relatively unknown writers. They will consider the writer's purpose, insofar as it can be determined, and the type of reader to whom the writing is addressed. They will examine carefully the organization of each type of writing with regard to its specific structural principles and to the use of topic sentences, transitions, and organizing and concluding sentences, and other effective prose devices. They will analyze sentence length, structure, punctuation, logic, and a variety of techniques for making sentences pleasing and forceful. They will note as well the various means used to create effective diction.

As students deal with the above elements of analysis, they will also be required to write as much as possible through assignments closely related to the analysis being done and to the prose models and categories being studied. Students will be encouraged to use and experiment with specific stylistic features. Writing, apart from analysis, should take up a minimum of sixty percent of class time.

With emphasis on such basics as reading, thinking, writing, oral communication, and group dynamic skills, the course contributes significantly to the attainment of the general aims of education.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- 1. Understand the crucial role of audience and purpose in writing**
- 2. Understand and use the structural features of effective prose**
- 3. Understand the effective use of a variety of techniques for making sentences pleasing and forceful and be able to use them**
- 4. Understand the use of a variety of means for creating effective diction and be able to appropriately employ them**
- 5. Employ in all of their writing a variety of appropriate stylistic features**
- 6. Understand and use the many elements of narration**
- 7. Write narrative essays**
- 8. Understand and use the many elements of description**
- 9. Write descriptive essays**
- 10. Understand and use several methods of expository development (example and illustration, cause and effect, process analysis, classification and division, comparison and contrast)**
- 11. Write expository essays**
- 12. Use, when needed, a combination of methods of development for effective writing**
- 13. Follow, with major assignments, the writing sequence of pre-writing, drafting or writing, revising or content editing, proofreading, and presenting or sharing**
- 14. Use effective procedures for small group learning behaviour**

COURSE CONTENT

The main purpose of Language 3101 is to develop and refine students' writing styles through both **analyzing and writing** prose - exposition, narration, and description.

The analysis of prose models of exposition, description, and narration focuses on the following features:

1. The content, meaning, or idea that is conveyed; the writer's purpose, insofar as it can be determined; and the type of reader to whom the writing is addressed.
2. The organization of the writing with regard to its specific structural principles and the general elements of effective essay writing.
3. The means used to create effective diction, sentences, and style.

The writing assignments relate to the traditional prose categories (exposition, description, narration), prose models, and stylistic features studied.

The prose categories are as follows:

1. **Narration** - The organization of events and actions in a time sequence by character(s) in a particular setting with emphasis on such elements as point of view, tone, purpose, dialogue, effective description and the use of narration to support description and exposition.
2. **Description** - Both objective and subjective description with emphasis on spatial order, sensory perceptions, dominant impression, literal and figurative language, and the use of description to support narration and exposition.
3. **Exposition** - Writing that explains with the use of logic and facts. The following five commonly used formats are studied:
 - **Example and Illustration** are used to support an idea, reinforce a contention or clarify some topic.
 - **Cause and Effect** are interdependent relationships; they attempt to answer the why and what of a situation; the "cause" is considered the reason behind a situation; the "effect" is what happens because of the cause.
 - **Process Analysis** gives directions and/or simply provides information about how to perform a particular task, how something works or happens.

- **Classification and Division** is a means whereby items, information and ideas are organized; "classification" sorts or put things into categories; "division" attempts to analyze the parts or sections into which something is divided.
- **Comparison and Contrast** uses similarities and differences, or a combination of the two, to illustrate and discuss an idea.

COURSE MATERIALS

Authorized Resource

Drover, N. and Gordon A. Francis, *Process and Purpose - Exposition, Narration, Description*,
Gage Publishing, 1991.

PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUCTION

1. The composing process that many writers tend to follow can be presented as a five stage procedure:

Prewriting Activities

Ideas
Form

Audience
Purpose

Drafting or Writing
Revising or Content Editing
Proofreading
Presenting or Sharing

Although the above stages are more recursive than linear, the theory itself is important. As well, the best writing processes are flexible and organic and tend to bend and grow to meet students' needs. Writing involves continuous movement between and among the various stages in the process; for example, when revising a paragraph, the writer may return to the prewriting stage for new ideas and/or directions.

The writing process, central to Language 3101 and for some assignments, will include the following:

Prewriting Activities

- A. Generate ideas (students need opportunities to discuss experiences and ideas so as to heighten their quality and reveal their potential)

- respond to the prose models, and ask questions
- read, discuss, ask, view, listen, experience
- brainstorm
- use semantic webs and maps
- use the reporter's questions: Who? What? When? Why? How?
- focused free writing
- outlining, listening
- random association, metaphors
- changing the orientation

- B. Organize information (make formal choices)

- identify the audience
- identify a subject, topic, main idea

- determine the purpose of the writing
- write a thesis statement

Writing Activities

At this stage students produce a first draft. Momentum is important as students focus their attention on the development of meaning and the flow of thought. During this phase, teachers can assist students who have difficulty getting started and keeping the writing moving. Teacher support is important. However, for the most part, writing is a solitary experience; the writer selects the ideas generated from prewriting experiences, arranges them, and puts them down on paper.

Revising Activities

Drafts are often rough and inaccurate. Revising brings clarity and focus. Revising means:

- moving ideas around
- adding information
- taking out redundant material
- considering paragraph structure and strategies
- considering clarity, economy, vigour and grace of diction

Revising involves attending to one or two things at a time, not everything at once.

Revising can be done in many ways. Students can examine their writing in relation to specific questions or guidelines. They can work individually or in small groups or the teacher can conduct a revision conference with a student or a group of students. Teaching key concepts will often be necessary during this phase, as the need occurs.

Students can be asked to do the following revising activities:

- Write another opening or topic sentence and compare it to the original
- Decide what the mood of their writing is. Note the words that produce this mood. Change other words to help add to this mood.
- Choose two of the shorter sentences and rewrite them, adding more details by answering these questions: When? Why?
- Rewrite two of their sentences by adding an opening word or phrase that answers one of these questions: Where? When?
- Form groups of three or four. Take turns reading their paragraphs aloud while the other group members listen. Make positive comments on one another's work.

Editing/Proofreading Activities

Revision and editing are not mutually exclusive. During revision, some proofreading may occur; during proofreading, some revision may occur.

Proofreading, or editing, is the process of checking a draft to make sure that the following things are correct:

- spelling
- capitalization
- punctuation
- title
- spacing
- grammar
- usage
- syntax
- paragraph indentations

Editing is a skill that the teacher can introduce gradually, teaching one or two skills at a time within the context of the students' writing. The teacher can demonstrate the process and then encourage individual and/or group editing. Editing checklists can be useful.

Presenting/Publishing

Students will write or use a word processor to print a final copy.

This final stage should prompt the teacher and/or students to do something with student work other than store it for evaluation. Student writing should be shared with others, and, if possible, students should receive responses from their readers.

2. Many of the activities and writing assignments will employ the writing process up to a point and will not lead to "polished" writing. Some activities can work on just parts of the writing process. Of particular importance are the use of approaches, exercises, and activities on sentence building, language effectiveness, and aspects of style relevant to the type or category of writing.
3. Many of the activities of the course are designed to be carried out by two or more students working together. However, for group discussion and group learning to be effective, the work must be well planned and the purpose of the task must be clearly understood by all group members.

Students may require assistance when determining their roles and functions in the group (e.g., a recorder takes notes, a chairperson keeps the discussion on track and encourages

all members to become involved). The natural leader of a group may need assistance to avoid replacing the appointed leader. As well, roles should vary and students should experience different roles.

Members of discussion groups may increase their involvement if they feel they have some ownership of the rules. Therefore, have students generate discussion rules and post these as reminders. Ensure that everyone understands the rules. Rules may, however, change according to the goals of the group.

Although the strongest decisions are those arrived at by group consensus, consensus is often difficult to achieve. Other processes for making decisions will also need emphasis: majority vote, compromise, minority control, expert or authority in the group.

4. **Computers** have many applications in the English classrooms. Each application has advantages and disadvantages, with the word processor application having probably the greatest impact.

A. Some programs analyze the written text and give feedback on the quality of the spelling, the frequency of grammatical errors, the readability level and so on. Computers do such tasks thoroughly and fairly quickly, but the results are not always convincing or desirable. However, to the extent that there are spelling checks that indicate misspellings and leave them to students to make corrections, the application has indeed some merit.

B. Another computer application involves drill and practice exercises. However, grammar and usage drill and practice exercises are no longer a mainstay of English teaching and as such the frequency and widespread use of computerized drill and practice routines needs to be monitored carefully. In a few circumstances, drill and practice software is appropriate, primarily if a teacher wants to focus on a certain problem that one or a few students are having. However, it is generally advisable that after the student has used the software, the teacher should assign some writing and observe whether the student continues to make the error. If so, the software hasn't succeeded and the student should not be directed to use it again.

C. Some computer applications take the form of simulations or games. A branching

narrative is presented and the player's response determines the outcome of each encounter and the whole story. Usually, the player has to read something on screen before making a decision; thus such games test comprehension and improve reading skills. They may also exercise and improve logical thinking, mapping/diagramming skills and spatial thinking; problem-solving ability and vocabulary. Some software not only allows the players to participate in the story, but also to write his or her own branches for another player. In some cases the player must analyze a character in order to solve a mystery.

- D. Students enjoy using a **graphics package** to make illustrations, charts, and so on. Graphics programs also allow students who have difficulty with written and/or spoken language an opportunity to strengthen their understanding by manipulating a non-verbal medium.
- E. Software exists - some of it simple, some very complicated - **for desktop publishing**. The user can combine word processed text and computer graphics to create a number of publications - pamphlets and flyers, advertisements, newspapers, magazines, illustrated term papers and so on. These packages give students a real sense of publishing, and help to refine notions of genre, audience, and purpose.
- F. Unlike the above mentioned computer applications, **the word processor** does not attempt to analyze student's work or teach the student. It is a powerful and exciting writing tool but it has its share of dangers and limitations.

Students often like to write with word processors, even students who don't care much for writing usually. They can manipulate the medium easily. However, word processors by themselves will not teach writing skills. Improvement occurs when students show their written work to others and review it collaboratively. When this exchange is encouraged, students examine the overall structure and purpose of their work and make significant revisions.

Word processors have characteristics that can significantly influence students' writing habits.

- It is easier to edit and revise text on a word processor than on paper.
- A writer can move sentences and paragraphs almost as easily as he or she can delete a single letter.
- All revisions can be made neatly, so tedious recopying is unnecessary.
- Students find that drafting and redrafting are more manageable.
- The word processor has the capacity to print clear copies. With the neat type, students often respond by taking new pride in their work.
- Reading hard copy allows the student a bit of distance from his or her composition. The need for changes can be sensed and those changes can then be input into the word processor and a new and equally attractive draft can be printed out rapidly. There is not extra effort required to produce multiple copies for classmates to read.

The word processor gives students and teachers a unique opportunity to explore the full range of the writing process - prewriting, writing, and post writing performances. The writing process is not linear. Writing involves continuous movement between and among the various stages in the process. The following illustrates a computer/word processing program in use in the English classroom:

Prewriting

- Brainstorm/recall topics, vocabulary, descriptive phrases, facts, details, generalizations
- Identify the audience

Writing

- Use computer functions to organize and sequence material generated during the prewriting activity
- Write first draft
- Edit individually, or by conferring with peers, teachers
- Revise using the computer functions of inserting, deleting or moving
- Edit as needed

Post-Writing

- Write a final draft focusing on correctness and precision
- Print and share final copy with several audiences including peers, teachers, and others

There are indeed limitations with the use of word processors but these can be overcome.

- Keyboarding skills determine the rate of composition. Fortunately, typing skills adequate to the task are learned very quickly by the students
- Using word processors can be time consuming. It might be necessary to begin with short assignments.

- In some classes there will be only one or a few computers available. However, several students can work successfully together at one computer station if the focus of the activity is discussion and exploration of ideas. Group work can be encouraged on the computer.
- Hours of work can be lost in an instant. However, to minimize the danger, students could make back up copies of their files, and they could save, their work frequently when they are composing at the terminal.

EVALUATION

Evaluation techniques should relate to the learning objectives and to the teaching emphasis of the course, and should indicate student achievement and program effectiveness. It is a continuous process, and one with dimensions that are diagnostic (to determine present levels of competence in relation to the objectives of the course); formative (to monitor progress through a concept or unit of study); and summative (to determine the level of achievement). Below are some points for consideration.

1. Writing and the writing process are integral to the course. This process includes reading, discussing, draft writing, revising, editing and presenting. Most of these areas can be evaluated, both in terms of process and in terms of the final product itself.
2. Recent research indicates that frequent rigorous marking of writing by teachers is time consuming and ineffective. Most often it is believed that the time and energy should be redirected towards the prewriting and revising stages and towards more effective evaluation techniques.
3. The writing clinic is a revision technique that offers the teacher and the class numerous opportunities to co-operatively evaluate various pieces of writing. Students can volunteer with transparencies or photocopies of their writing. The teacher and the class can then discuss the writing. The teacher's role in conducting the clinic is to:
 - develop the attitude that all writers exhibit strengths as well as weaknesses
 - create a positive constructive environment
 - establish a set of ground rules to facilitate the process
 - encourage students to suggest ways to improve the writing by asking questions
4. Any teachers' written comments should be brief, clear, positive, and constructive. As well, the response given should recognize the stage the student has reached in his/her writing. Appropriate comments encourage and advise.
5. Students will require guidance from the teacher (especially at first) when they are doing peer-editing and peer-evaluation. Emphasize that constructive criticism is necessary. Suggest, for example, that at each evaluation, students note one thing that was done particularly well and one area that requires improvement. Encourage students to be

specific in their evaluations. The following questions could easily be modified to prepare an appropriate "peer response sheet" that students could use:

- What do you like best about this item?
 - What is the main idea of the item?
 - What findings were expressed by the author?
 - What would you like to know more about?
 - Express your opinions about this item.
6. In view of the learning objectives of the course and the suggested teaching emphasis, a suitable classroom examination format would consist of the following:
- A. 40% Analyzing stylistic features of a prose passage. This prose could be either narration, or description, or exposition.
 - B. 60% Two writing assignments: one to be based on exposition; and one to be either narration or description.

Teachers are reminded that students taking this course are subject to a written public examination administered by the Department of Education. The High School Certification Handbook is published annually, and teachers should consult it for a general description of the examination and for procedural and scheduling details.

